GRAIN TRANSPORTATION REPORT

Agricultural Marketing Service
United States Department of Agriculture

APRIL 17, 2001

Flood Waters Cause Barge, Rail Problems. Heavy rains and melting snow are causing flood damage and day-to-day uncertainty for many residents along the Mississippi River. The swollen river, having already crested in some areas but still expected to crest in others, is causing some residents to evacuate. High water has also led the Coast Guard to close a 403-mile section of the river between Minneapolis, MN (lock and dam (L/D) 1), and Muscatine, IA (L/D 16), to barge traffic. Most locks and dams between L/D 1 and L/D 22, just below Hannibal, MO, will be closed until late April or early May due to high water. For some, it is the worst flooding since 1993, when unprecedented flooding stopped all barge traffic on the mid-Mississippi River. In the area of the Quad Cities of Davenport and Bettendorf, IA, and Rock Island and Moline, IL, the National Weather Service has predicted that flooding could approach or exceed 1993 levels. According to the weather service, the river is expected to crest at a level between 20 and 21 feet at Davenport on or about April 24, approximately 6 feet above the 15-foot flood stage. This will close in on the 22.6 record set in 1993. "I want to say that this is a fairly unique situation," stated to Larry Daily, president of the Alter Barge Line of Davenport. But, he continued, "Unfortunately, this is the third time in 10 years this has happened." Daily estimated that his company is losing $50, 000 per day with 250 of the company's 400 barges tied up along the river. Further, the chance of damage to cargo increases with the delay. One result of the flooding and over-abundance of rainfall during 1993 was a drop in corn production. At that time, production dropped to 6.3 billion bushels, considerably less than the 9.5 billion bushels produced in 1992 and the record crop of 10.1 billion bushels in 1994. Accordingly, the marketing year for corn exports indicated a decrease from 1.6 billion bushels during 1992 to 1.3 billion bushels in 1993. Exports in 1994, however, bounced back to a respectable 2.2 billion bushels.

River flooding from the Twin Cities through Iowa is also expected to continue to disrupt rail traffic during the next 2 weeks. Flood waters, for example, made it necessary for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe to suspend rail movements between Chicago, IL, and Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN. Trains are being rerouted but face delays of up to 48 hours on all products, including grain. Union Pacific has also discontinued interchanging traffic in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, deciding, instead, to reroute traffic to alternate interchange points. The Union Pacific has also embargoed a number of customers in the Twin Cities area. It should be noted that, during the river closure, export elevators have been able to source grain from other areas such as the Ohio River. Even with limited rail service, exporters have been able to supplement grain shortages with rail and long-haul truck deliveries. Fortunately, the current situation is not expected to last long, and exporters in the New Orleans area export market have indicated to USDA that available supplies of grain are sufficient to compensate for a short-term disruption of barge services.

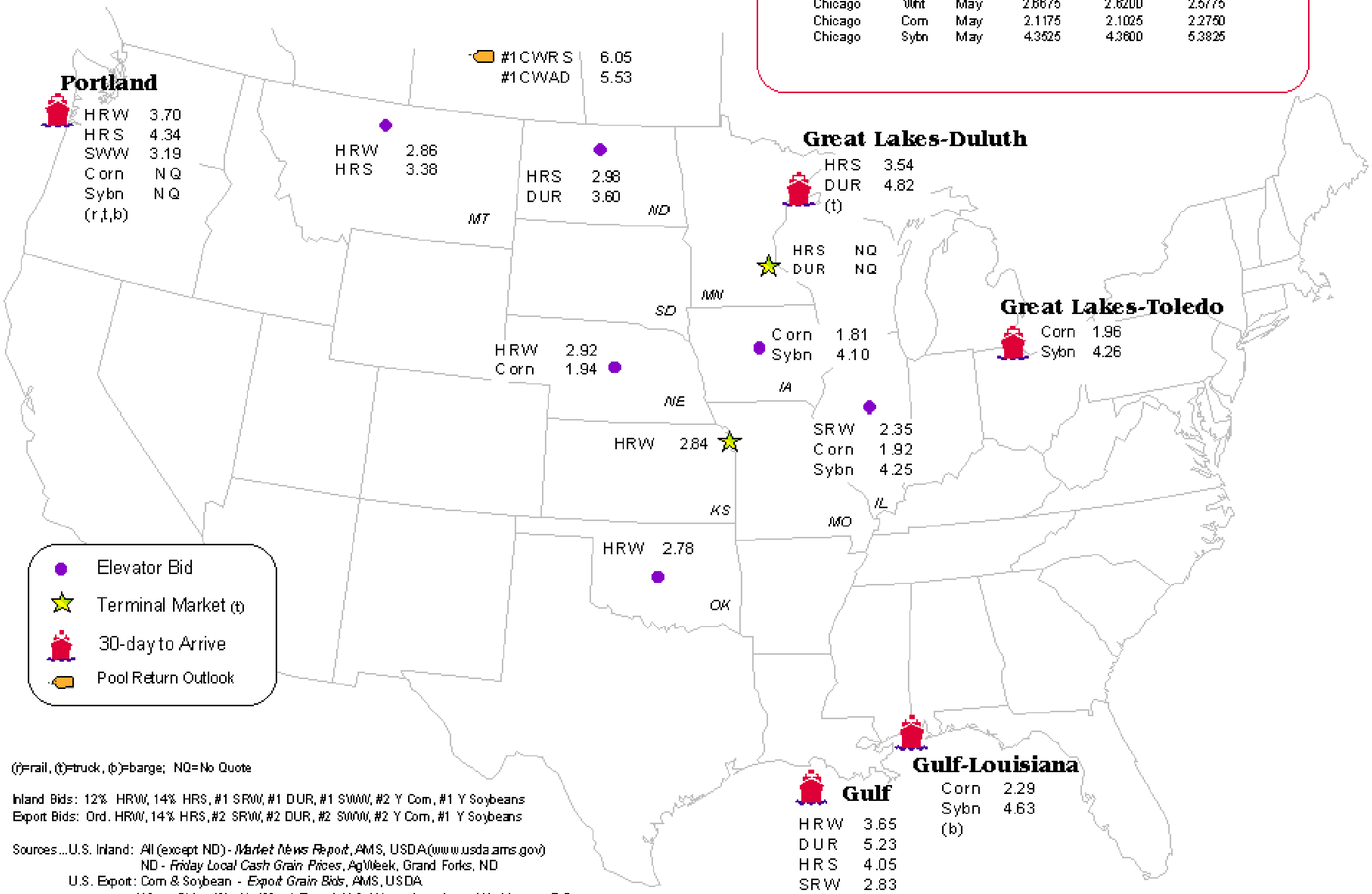
When water levels again allow navigation, the Coast Guard will likely implement traffic restrictions, such as enforcing no-wake zones, limiting travel to daylight hours, prohibiting tank barges, and reducing minimum tow sizes. Also, when the river reopens, a considerable amount of dredging may be necessary to clear channels. There will also be a need to replace the required buoys and other navigational aids. *(AP 4/16/17, Cedar Rapids Gazette 4/17, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, http://www.mvr.usace.army.mil/navdata/iceprt.0600, http://www.msnbc.com, Nick.Marathon@usda.gov or 202-690-0331, Marvin.Prater@usda.gov, or 690-6290)*

Poor Winter Wheat Harvest For Top Producing States. Winter wheat farmers in much of Kansas and Oklahoma are abandoning their fields and making way for summer crops due to an unusually dry planting season from July through November of last year. To make matters worse, the dry weather was followed by a high volume of rain which damaged planted fields and further delayed planting for farmers who had waited to plant. "The problems are widespread. It's going to be a train wreck this year," according to Kent Watkins, a certified crop consultant in Oklahoma. Some reports indicate that Oklahoma winter wheat production will drop from 142.8 million bushels last year to not much more than 100 million bushels this year. Until this time, its 5-year average had been 160 million bushels. Crops in both Oklahoma and Kansas, however, are being abandoned due to decreased production and low quality. Instead, fields are either being used for hay or grazing or are being cleared for other crops such as soybeans, milo, or corn. Field abandonment is currently at 40 percent in Oklahoma and 20 percent in Kansas. With the decrease in production, Kansas also may risk losing its standing as the Nation's number one State for wheat production to North Dakota. According to estimates, wheat production for Kansas will drop to 313 million bushels this year, compared to 347 million bushels last year. North Dakota is expected to harvest 310 million bushels this year. Furthermore, total U.S. wheat production may drop below 2 billion bushels, the lowest since 1991. Production problems also may cause wheat futures contracts to increase to $3.50 per bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade, the highest since 1997. *(Reuters 4/16, Wall Street Journal 4/16, AP 4/17).*

Report is prepared by Karl Hacker and Sigal Nissan, Agricultural Economists, Transportation & Marketing, Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA (202) 690-1304. Report design by Kimberly Vachal, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, North Dakota State University. This report can be found on the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/grain.htm. E-mail comments to Karl.Hacker@usda.gov .

Grain Bid Summary

Futures:			04/12/01	Week Ago 04/06/01	Year Ago 04/13/00
Kansas City	Wht	May	3.1325	3.0900	2.8075
Minneapolis	Wht	May	3.2250	3.1450	3.2325
Minneapolis	Dur	July	4.5500	4.5500	n.a.
Chicago	Wht	May	2.6675	2.6200	2.5775
Chicago	Corn	May	2.1175	2.1025	2.2750
Chicago	Sybn	May	4.3525	4.3600	5.3825

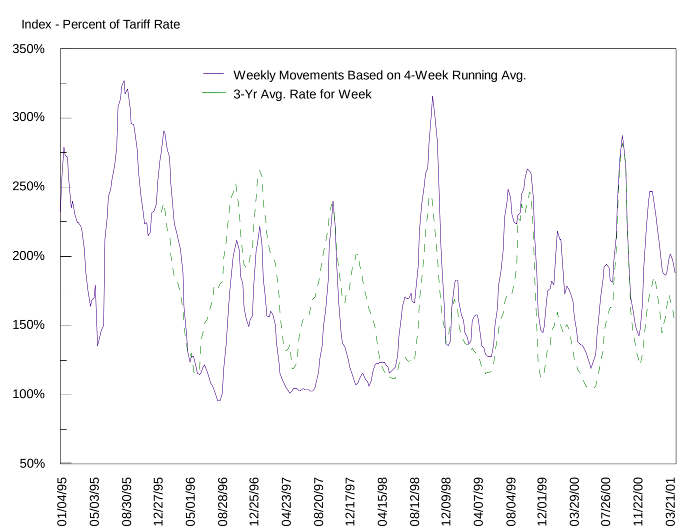


(r)=rail, (t)=truck, (b)=barge; NQ=No Quote

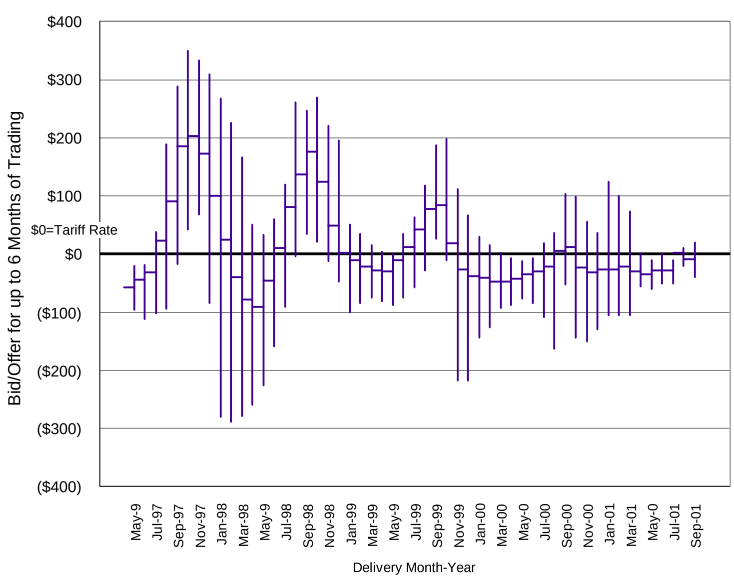
Inland Bids: 12% HRW, 14% HRS, #1 SRW, #1 DUR, #1 SWW, #2 Y Corn, #1 Y Soybeans
Export Bids: Ord. HRW, 14% HRS, #2 SRW, #2 DUR, #2 SWW, #2 Y Corn, #1 Y Soybeans

Sources...U.S. Inland: All (except ND) - *Market News Report*, AMS, USDA(www.usda.ams.gov)
ND - *Friday Local Cash Grain Prices*, AgWeek, Grand Forks, ND
U.S. Export: Corn & Soybean - *Export Grain Bids*, AMS, USDA
Wheat Bids - *Weekly Wheat Report*, U.S. Wheat Associates, Washington, D.C.
Canada: Bids in CAN$, Canadian Wheat Board, Winnipeg (www.cwb.ca)

Spot Barge Rate - Illinois River



Secondary Rail Market Bids



Rail Car 'Auction' Offerings

Delivery for:	Apr-01		Jun-01	
	Offered	% Sold	Offered	% Sold
BNSF-COT	10,857	15%	12,000	1%
UP-GCAS	5,400	1%	5,400	0%

Source: Transportation & Marketing /AMS/USDA; www.bnsf.com; www.uprr.com

Secondary Rail Car Market

Average Premium/Discount to Tariff, $/Car - Last Week

	Delivery Period			
	Apr-01	May-01	Jun-01	Jul-01
BNSF-GF	$(37)	$(43)	$(30)	$(14)
UP-Pool	$(32)	$(46)	$(50)	$(45)

Source: T&M/AMS/USDA. Data from Atwood/ConAgra., Harvest States Co-op, James B. Joiner Co., Tradewest Brokerage Co.;
GF=Guaranteed Freight, GEEP=Guaranteed Eqpt. Exchange, Pool=Guaranteed Pool

note... bids listed are market INDICATORS only & are NOT guaranteed prices, missing value=No Bid Quoted

Railroad Car 'Auction' Results

Average Premium/Discount to Tariff, $/Car - Last Auction

Delivery for:	May-01	Jun-01	Jul-01
COT/N. Grain	no bid	no bid	no bid
COT/S. Grain	no bid	no bid	no bid
GCAS/Region 2	no bid	no bid	no offer
GCAS/Region 4	no bid	no bid	no offer

Source: T&M/AMS USDA. Data from www.bnsf.com, www.uprr.com,
(COT=Certificate of Transportation; GCAS=Grain Car Allocation System)

Southbound Barge Freight Nominal/Cash Basis Values

Index=Percent of Tariff, Based on 1976 Tariff Benchmark Rate

Week ended	River/Region	Contract Period	Rate: Futures	Rate: Cash
04/17/01	St. Louis	May	130	135
		July	136	145
		Sept	195	205
		Nov	156	0
		Jan	143	0
	Illinois River	May	144	150
		July	158	168
		Sept	218	225
		Nov	181	0
		Jan	0	0

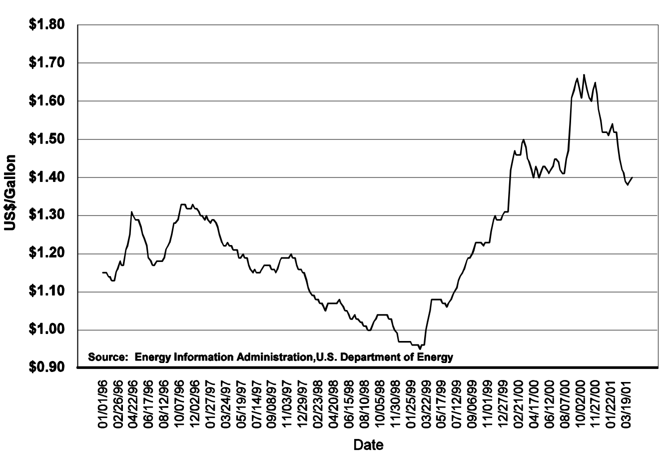
Source: St. Louis Merchants Exchange

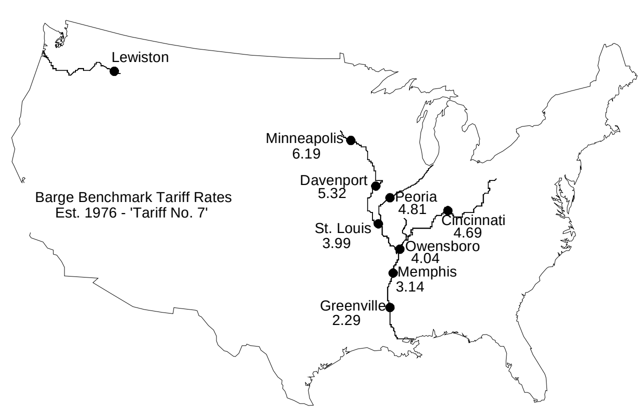
Southbound Barge Freight Spot Rates

	4/11/01	4/4/01	May '01	July '01
Twin Cities	0	0	180	196
Mid-Mississippi	158	178	150	171
Illinois River	158	178	146	164
St. Louis	133	147	131	145
Lower Ohio	146	160	138	153
Cairo-Memphis	128	141	126	140

Source: Transportation & Marketing /AMS/USDA
nq=no quote;

Weekly Retail Diesel (Road) Prices (Including Taxes)

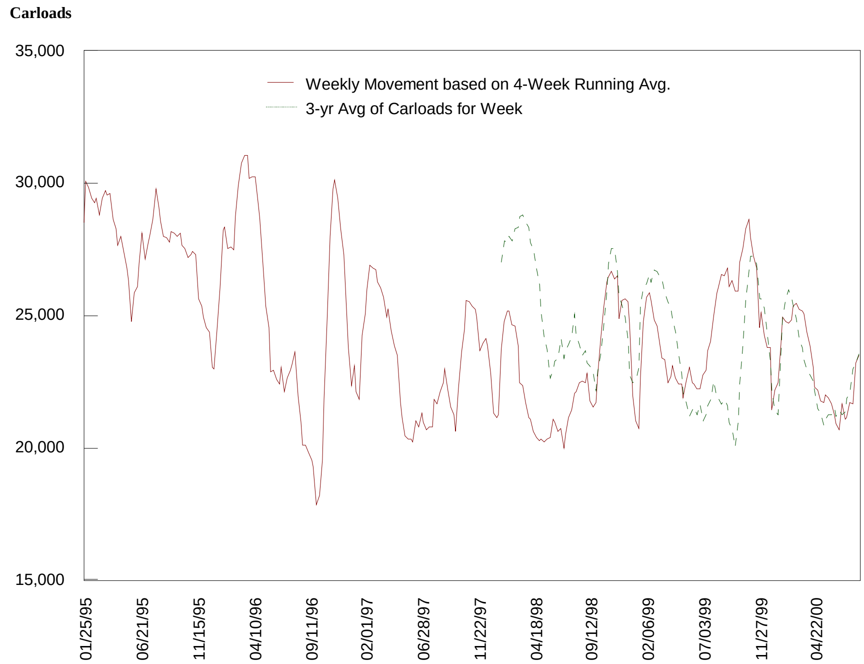




Class I Railroad Grain Car Loadings	
Week Ending:	Carloads
3/24/01	22,038
03/31/01	22,824
04/07/01	22,938
Year to Date - 2001	318,641
Year to Date - 2000	347,084
Total 2000	1,188,917
Total 1999	1,270,375

Source: Association of American Railroads

Grain Car Loadings for Class I Railroads



Class I Rail Carrier Grain Car Bulletin

Grain Carloads Originated

	East				West			Canada	
	Conrail	CSXT	IC	NS	BNSF	KCS	UP	CN	CP
04/07/01	0	2,934	0	3,075	9,056	540	7,333	5,011	3,973
This Week Last Year	0	2,994	1,432	2,772	7,241	472	7,772	2,802	5,529
2001 YTD	0	46,637	0	44,130	126,671	6,937	94,266	67,435	65,259
2000 YTD	0	40,699	26,411	41,256	119,849	8,930	109,939	40,755	62,887
2000 Total	0	147,708	70,155	153,905	425,849	26,515	364,785	160,749	239,670
1999 Total	15,522	132,157	88,056	138,379	465,088	33,911	398,262	121,381	206,328

Source: Association of American Railroads

Tariff Rail Rates for Unit Train Shipments

April 2001

Date Effective	Tariff Item	Commodity	Origin	Destination	Rate Per Car	Rate Per MT	Rate/Per Bushel*
04/05/01	45560	Wheat	Minneapolis, MN	Houston, TX	$2,050	$22.60	$0.62
04/05/01	43521	Wheat	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$3,877	$42.74	$1.16
04/05/01	46540	Wheat	Kansas City, MO	Houston, TX	$1,550	$17.09	$0.47
04/05/01	43586	Wheat	Kansas City, MO	Portland, OR	$4,240	$46.74	$1.27
04/05/01	43581	Wheat	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	$3,905	$43.04	$1.17
04/05/01	31040	Corn	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$2,900	$31.97	$0.81
04/05/01	31035	Corn	Kansas City, MO	Portland, OR	$2,700	$29.76	$0.76
04/05/01	31040	Corn	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	$2,700	$29.76	$0.76
04/05/01	61180	Soybean	Minneapolis, MN	Portland, OR	$2,680	$29.54	$0.80
04/05/01	61180	Soybean	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	$2,430	$26.79	$0.73
05/01/98	61180	Soybean	Omaha, NE	Portland, OR	$2,780	$25.23	$0.83

Source: www.bnsf.com

Approximate load per car = 100 tons: Corn 56 lbs/bu, Wheat & Soybeans 60 lbs/bu

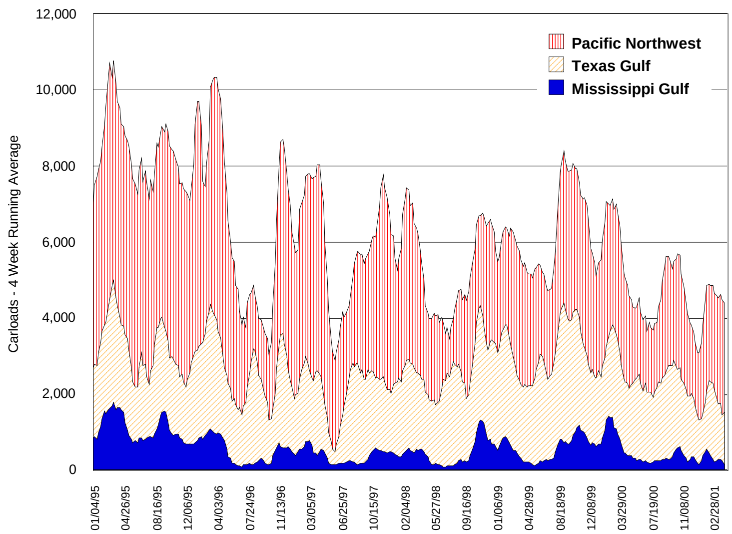
Rail Deliveries to Port
Carloads

	Mississippi Gulf	Texas Gulf	Pacific Northwest	Atlantic & East Gulf
Week Ending:				
03/07/01	274*	1,993	2,193	764
03/14/01	425*	1,113	2,842	942
03/21/01	234*	995	2,994	996
03/28/01	192*	1,774	3,538	774
04/04/01	132*	968	2,833**	407
04/11/01	8*	1,810*	2,142	427
YTD 2001	4,421	22,741	39,162	12,387
YTD 2000	14,038	31,831	48,217	6,083
Total 1998	23,844	115,321	138,461	12,505
Total 1997	20,152	93,265	195,953	9,147

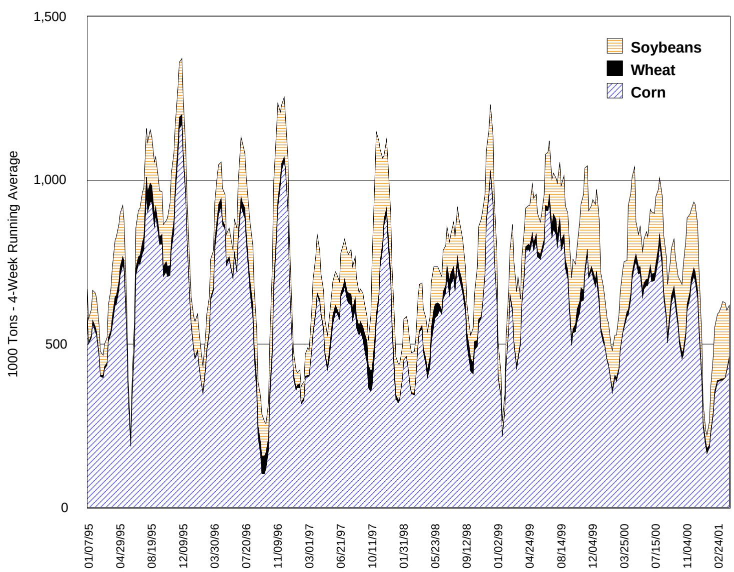
Source: Transportation & Marketing/AMS/USDA

(*) Incomplete Data
(**) Revised Data

Rail Deliveries to Port



Barge Movements - Locks 27



Barge Grain Movements
for week ending 3/31/01

	Corn	Wht	Sybn	Total
		1,000 Tons		
Mississippi River				
Rock Island, IL (L15)	86	4	49	140
Winfield, MO (L25)	137	5	107	251
Alton, IL (L26)	409	5	92	508
Granite City, IL (L27)	399	5	96	501
Illinois River (L8)	187	0	8	195
Ohio (L52)	44	0	25	69
Arkansas (L1)	0	14	7	21
2001 YTD	6,110	496	2,939	10,196
2000 YTD	6,880	379	2,552	10,381
Total 2000	33,482	2,518	10,327	48,247
Total 1999	36,711	2,883	9,771	51,887

Miss YTD: Calendar year totals include Miss/27, Ohio/52 and Ark/1.
Source: U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; n/a=not available

U.S. Export Balances (1,000 Metric Tons)

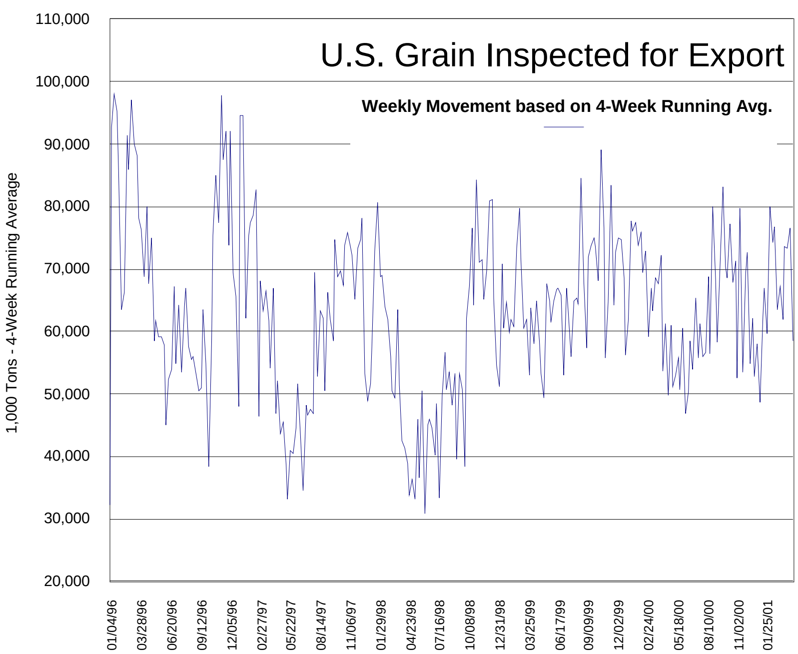
	Wheat						Corn	Soybean	Total
	HRW	*SRW*	*HRS*	*SWW*	*DUR*	*All*			
Unshipped Exports-Crop Year									
04/05/01	1,148	680	984	625	272	3,710	5,618	2,565	11,893
This Week Year Ago	1,112	345	1,035	597	322	3,411	7,305	2,041	12,757
Cumulative Exports-Crop Year									
00/01 YTD	7,903	3,793	4,819	4,462	954	21,931	27,841	22,284	72,056
99/00 YTD	9,298	3,726	4,793	3,390	798	22,007	29,668	17,713	69,388
97/98 Total	9,858	4,710	6,305	5,413	1,232	27,518	37,220	24,516	89,254
96/97 Total	7,387	3,645	7,864	6,105	963	25,965	44,476	24,501	94,942

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service YTD-Year-to-Date (www.fas.usda.gov) Crop Year:Wheat=5/31-6/01, Corn & Soybeans=9/01-8/31

Select U.S. Port Regions - Grain Inspections for Export - 1,000 Metric Tons

	Pacific Region			Mississippi Gulf			Texas Gulf		
	Wheat	*Corn*	*Soybean*	*Wheat*	*Corn*	*Soybean*	*Wheat*	*Corn*	*Soybean*
04/12/01	173	146	32	128	581	267	204	0	12
2000 YTD	2,878	1,450	1,152	1,590	8,819	6,632	1,558	146	713
1999 YTD *	2,537	2,488	560	1,799	9,309	6,689	1,545	86	670
% of Last Year	27%	33%	177%	31%	28%	44%	21%	26%	51%
1998 Total	10,838	4,373	651	5,048	31,330	14,917	7,270	562	1,392

Source: Federal Grain Inspection Service YTD-Year-to-Date



Select Canadian Ports - Export Inspections
1,000 Metric Tons, Crop Year

	Wheat	Durum	Barley
Week Ended: 4/12/01			
Vancouver	4,041	349	936
Prince Rupert	1,502		0
Prairie Direct	896	226	331
Thunder Bay	490	171	36
St. Lawrence	1,827	1,410	25
2000 YTD Exports	8,756	2,156	1,328
1999 YTD Exports	10,154	2,406	1,174
% of Last Year	86%	90%	113%

Source: Canadian Grains Commission
YTD-Year-to-Date Crop Year 8/1-7/31

Gulf Region Vessels Loaded - Past 7 Days-

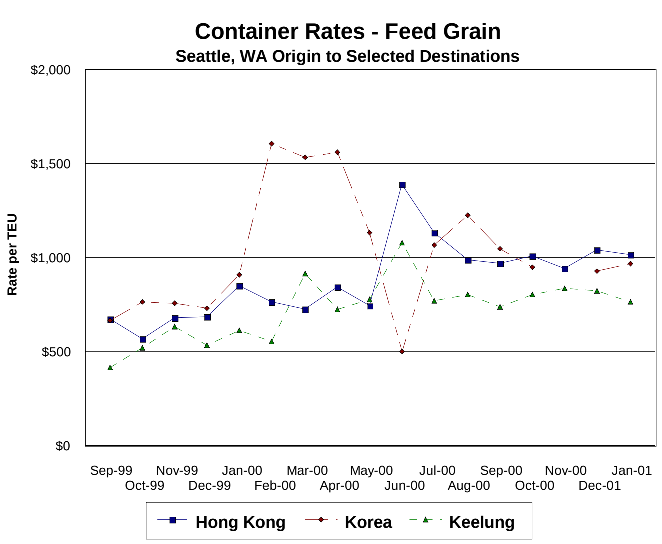
Port Region Ocean Grain Vessels

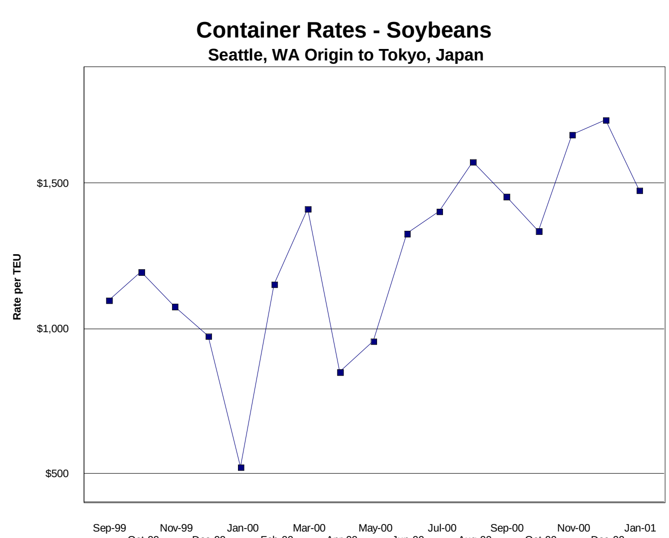
	Gulf			Pacific Northwest			Vancouver, B.C.		
	In Port	Loaded 7-Days	Due Next 10-Days	In Port	Loaded 7-Days	Due Next 10-Days	In Port	Loaded 7-Days	Due Next 10-Days
04/05/01	33	50	64	6			12	6	0
04/12/01	33	56	54	7			12	9	2
1999 Range	(14..47)	(39..65)	(34..80)	(6..18)			(2..20)	(2..15)	(0..9)
1998 Range	(19..62)	(34..64)	(40..93)				(1..19)	(3..14)	(0..10)
1999 Avg	32	52	65				9	9	3
1998 Avg	40	48	61				10	9	3
1997 Avg	33	45	58						

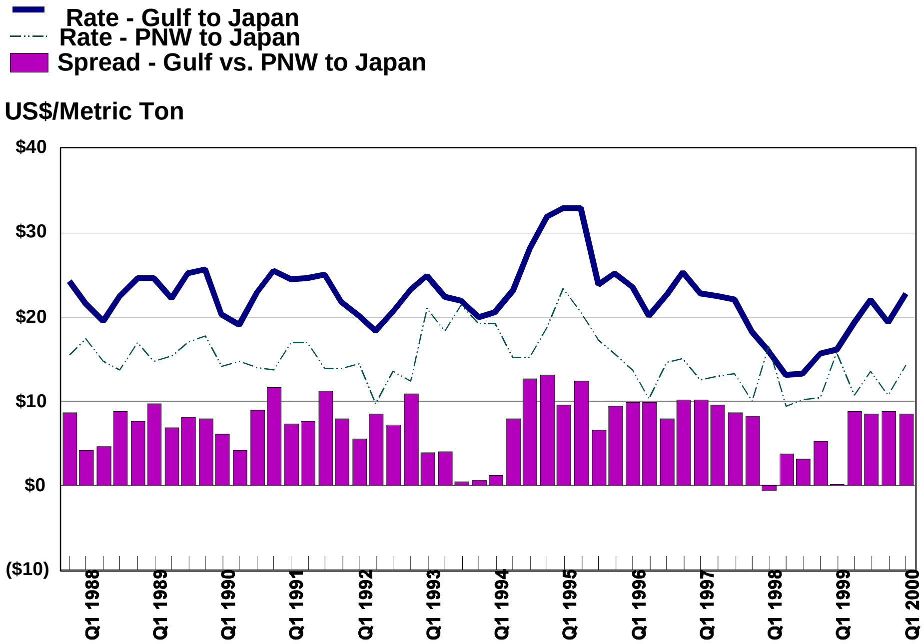
Source: Transportation & Marketing /AMS/ USDA

Container Ocean Freight Rates

Monthly Weighted Averages Based on Shipping Line Monthly Mkt. Share
Source: Transportation & Marketing/AMS/USDA







Quarterly Ocean Freight Rates

Quarterly Ocean Freight Rates
Average Rates & Percentage Changes, U.S. Dollars/Metric Ton - Basis

	2000 4th Qtr	1999 4th Qtr	% Change		2000 4th Qtr	1999 4th Qtr	% Change
Gulf to				**Pacific NW to**			
Japan	$22.38	$22.07	1%	Japan	$15.87	$13.55	17%
Mexico	$13.39	$15.21	-12%	Red Sea/ Arabian Sea	$26.70		
Venezuela	$13.29	$12.10	10%				
N. Europe	$14.96	$13.68	9%				
N. Africa	$22.26	$21.65	3%	**Argentina to**			
				N. Europe	$18.97	$17.77	7%
				Japan			

Source: Transportation & Marketing/AMS/USDA; (*) rates shown are for metric ton (2,204.62 lbs.=one metric ton)

Ocean Freight Rates **(Select Locations) - week ending 4/14/01**

Export Region	Import Region	Grain	Month	Volume Loaded (Tons)	Freight Rate ($Ton)
Gulf	Lisbon/Hamburg	Grains	Prompt	20,000	$17.50
Galveston	Egypt	Wheat	Apr.15/20	55,000	$16.25
Gulf	Taiwan	Heavy Grain	May 1/10	56,000	$21.50
Gulf	Japan	Heavy Grain	Apr. 15/19	54,000	$21.50
Gulf	Japan	Heavy Grain	Apr. 25/May 5	54,000	$22.25
PNW	Taiwan	Heavy Grain	Apr. 20/30	58,000	$14.90
So. Brazil	Morocco	Heavy Grain	Apr. 15/25	23,000	$22.00
United Kingdom	Tunisia	Barley	Apr. 19/27	25,000	$18.50
Germany	Saudi Arabia	Barley	Apr. 10/20	55,000	$15.10

Source: Maritime Research Inc.; rates shown are for long ton (2,240 lbs.=one long ton), F.O.B., except where otherwise indicated; op=option